

WASHINGTON, DC – Today, Congressman Robert C. "Bobby" Scott, Ranking Member of the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism and Homeland Security and a lead developer of the 2008 Second Chance Act, issued the following statement praising the release of a new report by the Council of State Governments Justice Center highlighting seven states that have significantly reduced their statewide recidivism rates:

"This report is a strong confirmation that recidivism reduction efforts are beginning to work. Just a few years ago, recidivism rates were climbing in nearly every state, costing taxpayers millions and increasing crime. Now, over two thirds of all states have recidivism rates that are either holding steady or declining. This is testament to a commitment by state leaders to address the problem, and a bipartisan consensus at the federal level about the need for smart investments in effective reentry programs.

"The United States locks up a higher number and a higher percentage of people than any other country. In fact, studies have shown that the lockup rate is so high, that it is counterproductive as a crime reduction strategy. One of the consequences of this counterproductive strategy is a high recidivism rate. We were finding that two thirds of released offenders were rearrested within three years of release.

"To assist states and localities in reducing these high recidivism rates, we passed the bipartisan Second Chance Act to help them lessen recidivism risk factors by investing in evidence-based reentry programs that offer substance abuse or mental health treatment, education, employment training, and more. This report indicates that the Second Chance Act is working. It not only lowers crime rates, but also saves money.

"This report confirms a big victory in our efforts to reduce recidivism, and with the continuation of these successful reentry strategies through reauthorization of the Second Chance Act, the progress in reducing recidivism will continue to grow."

The full report can be accessed at: http://www.justicecenter.csg.org/files/9.24.12_Recidivism_Reductions.pdf

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